The Seed Sower.

A Magazine for the Church, the School, and the Home.

EDITORS: L. P. JACKS, M.A., AND JOSEPH WOOD.

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The Merry, Merry Christmas.

Sunshine and smile of winter drear,
White flower of love amid the snow,
Your presence bringeth summer here,
Whatever winds around us blow.
Our faces shine with hallowed joy,
The world puts on its state array,
For silver age and wishful boy
There's happiness on Christmas Day!

Our homes resound with merriment;
Divineness meets our common need;
With ours the angels' songs are blent,
Good will prevails, and kindly deed.
Men recognize love's power to bless,
They would fulfil its purpose clear,
They seek to spread pure happiness,—
To crown and grace the fading year!

They hear a voice across time's tide
That tells mankind of heaven above,
That maketh faith and hope confide,
Without a fear, in God's good love.
The child reclining in the arms
Of motherhood so pure and true
Is sheltered from the world's alarms,
So God must shelter me and you!

Our children bear the halo light
Of Christ's good thought and gentle way,
Like lilies born of summer bright,
They are his own on Christmas Day.
It is a pleasure then to live,
Because the world abides in good,
Each unto each doth blessing give,
In simple, sweet child brotherhood!

WILLIAM BRUNTON.

Unity of Worship amid Diversities of Theology.

The following passage contains the gist of the proposal made under this heading in our last issue. The deeply interesting letters now given have been written by request for the SEED SOWER, *and will be read by many with a keen appreciation of their points of difference. We are much indebted to Dr. Martineau, Dr. Drummond, and Mr. Addis for so kindly consenting to the request made. Contributions from other sources will appear in our next issue, and an answer will be given to adverse criticism:—*

"The suggestion is now offered that out of the fifty-two Sundays of the year a certain number should be set apart, and that one or more should be allotted in a fixed order to the most essential of the ideas named above, the intention being that in all the consenting churches worship should be conducted on the fixed Sunday, with avowed reference to the idea the day was set apart to mark and celebrate. Preaching would naturally tend to follow the same lines, though this, of course, would be left entirely to the discretion of the minister. A common liturgy would *not* be necessary, though it would be compatible with the scheme. But in all the consenting churches *one prayer* should be offered up in common and *one hymn or psalm* sung in common. A book of such prayers woutd have to be compiled by the competent, and adopted in the consenting churches.

"The following is an experimental sketch plan of the distribution of Sundays. It will be seen that it embodies what is of permanent value in the existing Christian year, giving full recognition to the great festivals of Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide. Indeed, it is an attempt to supply, in accordance with the spirit of free and rational piety, a new Christian Year.

"(It should be emphasised that the scheme as it stands is tentative only)."

A NEW CHRISTIAN YEAR.

January.—"Life as a Trust from a Higher Power;" Two Sundays.

February.—"The Consecration of Human Labour: The Labour of the Body and the Mind;" Two Sundays

March.—"Good and Evil: The Conflict and the Victory;" Two Sundays.

April (*Easter*).—"Dying to Live: Death, Re-birth, New Life;" Three Sundays.

May and June (*Whitsuntide*).—"The Manifestation of the Divine: The Divine Power, the Divine Light, the Divine Order, the Divine Love;" Four Sundays.

July, August, September.—Open.

October.—"Nonconformity and Religious Freedom;" One Sunday. "Other Religions;" One Sunday. "All Prophets;" One Sunday. "All Saints" (November 1st); One Sunday.

November.—"Civic Duty and the Kingdom of God;" Two Sundays.

December (*Christmas*).—"Domestic Life: The Divine Childhood; the Divine Motherhood; the Divine Meaning of Death and Commemoration of the Dead;" Two Sundays.

Total: 21 fixed Sundays; 31 unfixed.

Comments and criticisms on the above have been received by the author from—

I.

DR. MARTINEAU.

"35, Gordon Square, London, W.C., November 6, 1895. Dear Mr. Jacks,—You would hardly believe me if I told you the eager delight with which I ran through your letter when I found from it that you had been working at the theses of deepest interest to me—'Unity of Worship amid Diversities of Theology,' and could suggest a method of realising this spiritual intercommunion of Christendom. I turned with lively hope to see *how*, through this awakening of a deeper consciousness, the many folds, at present apart, are to become 'one fold, under one Shepherd.' Is it possible that the much-agitated problem of *Union* is within reach of settlement at last?

"Great was my disappointment on finding that under 'Diversities of Theology' were included not those which separated Protestant from Catholic, Calvinist from Armenian, Episcopalian from Presbyterian or Independent, Athanasian from Sabellian, but only such as may be found between *one Unitarian and another*. The 'Unity of Worship' which you propose to secure lies exclusively *within the Unitarian province*. It assumes the existence of a separate Unitarian Church as an ecclesiastical organisation, and provides for the culture of a common sentiment within it by instituting a peculiar set of fixed habits and observances that may be entered on the calendar of a 'New Christian Year.'

"I must frankly confess that I can neither desire the end in view nor approve of the proposed means for effecting it.

"Often as I have had occasion to protest against doctrinal conditions of fellowship in Christian worship, I must repeat it with ever-renewed astonishment at the growing insensibility to its importance, and the apparently final and fatal lapse of our people into the ordinary conception of this or that '*orthodoxy*' as the necessary basis of religious life in common. You contrast 'the dogmatist' with his or our 'unfettered gospel.' But 'Unitarians,' as such, are as much 'dogmatists' as 'Trinitarians;' *i.e.*, they just as much make '*a doctrine*,' specified or implied in their name, the condition of fellowship. And the closer they draw together *in that capacity* the more do they form a body of *separatists*, disowning, as fellow-worshippers, all Christians of different theology. Far from desiring the organisation of such a body, I regard it as an unworthy *retaliation in kind* on the exclusiveness of the 'orthodox' churches which have cast us out. 'The world,' you say, 'calls us Unitarians.' Yes, because the *creed system* has made and classified 'the world.' Shall we, who have discredited and discarded its creeds, accept its classifications? To do so is a betrayal of *our distinctive trust*: it is to say 'We may as well exclude the Trinitarians or warn them off, *for they will not come*, though the door is open.' This last assertion is contrary to history and present fact. Mixed theologies were co-present in our places of worship all through the development of opinion from Baxter's time to Lardner's; and, to my knowledge, continued, in memorable instances, all through my own ministerial life.

"The more you organise churches on doctrinal bases the more do you intensify and consolidate their differences and embarrass the process of approximation under the influence of deeper spiritual affinities. Under the silent play of these affinities the differences will sooner die of themselves.

"Even if I could desire the end in view, I could not put any trust in the proposed means of realising it.

"It would be found impracticable. No minister, except the author of the scheme who is in the secret of its contents, could find himself at home in it, so as to work it out at prescribed times. Sermons cannot be produced as task work, and none are of less worth than such as are produced for specified occasions. Local needs, moods of the inner life, calls of the Spirit of God, cannot be formulated, but must be left to their own free incidence if the preacher's soul is to give forth true light. A programme put into my hands in conformity to which I was expected to preach for two-fifths of the year would have driven me from the ministry in despair; I could have kept to it only by labouring *will-work*, while silencing the prayers and suppressing the yearnings of the spirit that is more than ours. However unimpeachable may be the summary and distribution of subjects for the preacher, they will have no appreciable accord with what it is given him to say, as you will find if you take a score or two of volumes from the best homiletic literature and try to arrange their contents under the headings of your tentative scheme or any other similarly preconceived.

"If the proposed scheme is impracticable on the minister's side, I fear it would be ineffective on the people's. Can we really look for the unifying charm attributed to even *one prayer* offered and *one hymn* sung in common in a number of consenting congregations? The experiment is already in operation on a scale far less narrow. For, of several liturgies found in our churches, each is in habitual use in many congregations. Is each group of these congregations conscious of a special unification distinguishing it from those who worship in terms of another book? Their fellowship is neither greater nor less with the one than with the other, and for the most part the difference is not even known.

"The material which is distributed over the calendar of the *old* "Christian Year" has, in every case, a reason for its place, being always an event in time—a baptism, a transfiguration, a crucifixion, a martyrdom, a saint's canonization, &c. Each of these has its commemoration on some assignable day of the year, and all may be kept like the birthdays in a family. And in the long ages of Christendom, when the people had neither Scriptures in their hands nor power to read them, the Gospel story and the drama of the Church had to be familiarised to them by the hearing of the ear and representation to the eye, and above all by the dedication of special days, with appropriate prayers, symbols and recitals, to the memory of the incident or person associated with the date. This ritual of the sacred year and of saints' days, with the miracle plays accompanying it, was the ecclesiastical provision for religious culture and instruction of the people, and stood in the place of the modern schooling and Bible-reading. It was, in fact, a pictorial Bible without the text, and saints' calendar without the biography—an admirable discipline—of dated memorabilia of persons and events summed up within the year, and kept fresh in thought by repetition as the years came round, but inadequate and superseded since the printing press and the school have enlarged our resources so far beyond this elementary drill. For

"We have now to teach things which have *no dates*, truths that are eternal, relations that are spiritual, duties that have no tenses and are never past. And so far are you from overlooking these that they are copiously present in your programme of organised preaching. But what business have they with pre-determined dates, having nothing in them that is historical or commemorative? They have no *succession* in them out of which you can construct a 'New Christian Year.' The result, it seems to me, is an artificial an unmeaning imitation of a once natural and intelligent usage.

"In short, I deprecate the attempt to *organise the spiritual life of a Church. Organisation* is a provision for the good ordering and easy working of external business, for securing a practical end without failure and without waste. In Church matters its function is to provide the best curators for the common property and the best constitution for administering the common affairs, and opening a way for spontaneous Christian action and result—that belongs to ecclesiastical polity—is subject to organisation; but if you push it further the spiritual life either rebels or is withered up.

"The proposals which I ventured, without effect, to offer at Leeds aimed at no more than

such a business organisation. It was simply an answer to the question, 'What is to become of our poor country congregations?' and gave the reply, 'The strong must help the weak; and this is how it may be done.' The bolder scheme of *The Seed Sower* would have affected me then with the same shrinking which I have now tried to explain.—I remain, dear Mr. Jacks, affectionately yours, JAMES MARTINEAU."

II.

DR. DRUMMOND.

"Manchester College, Oxford, November 18, 1895. Dear Mr. Jacks,—It is only in answer to your request that I venture to put on paper a few remarks on your very interesting article in the last number of *The Seed Sower*, on 'Unity of Worship amid Diversities of Theology;' for I do not feel that I have anything of real value to impart, and I do not wish to show any lukewarmness towards proposals which are seriously intended for the benefit of the Churches.

"With your aspirations after a closer union of Churches, that is, as I understand it, for a larger and deeper spiritual fellowship, I have the strongest sympathy. It is only through communion with other men in our highest relations that we at once strengthen what is best in our individual life, and escape from our individual limitations into a life which is richer and grander than our own. Even a Stoic, who might be supposed to dwell most on the self-sufficingness of the solitary man, used these remarkable words:—'As the leaves cannot flourish by themselves, but want a branch wherein they may grow and whence they may draw sap, so those precepts wither if they are alone; they need to be grafted in a sect' [quoted from Seneca, by Lightfoot, Philip, p. 283]. Our association in a Church springs in part from this felt necessity; and a Church accordingly does not satisfy our legitimate expectations unless it sustains our weakness and supplements our deficiencies from the fulness of its own divine gifts. It is only in a great historic society that any grand ideal can permanently enshrine itself, and work out through successive generations its full meaning for mankind; and we cannot become complete in our striving for that ideal without extending our communion over wide reaches of time and space. This large communion has been provided for us by the Christian Church, the divine ideal in Christ gradually working out its destined realisation through the tissue of human society, and coming to us laden with all the precious memories of its origin, and all the wealth of power which it has gained through a history which extends through so many centuries and over so many lands. In order that we may take deep draughts of this abounding life, we meet together in brotherly fellowship to worship the Father in spirit and in truth, and to seek for the realisation in ourselves and others of the ideal of divine Sonship in the spirit of Christ.

"But whence, then, comes the isolation of which you so justly complain? In part at least from the necessities of our position. We desire to belong to the commonwealth of Christendom; but Christendom is rent in pieces, and from fellowship in any of the large and well organised churches, which at least represent something of the historic dignity and power of Christianity, we are debarred by the imposition of terms of communion which it is impossible for us honestly to accept. In the silence of our own hearts we may have communion with Catholic, Anglican, or Lutheran, and feel that the death of saints, who on earth were confined in a sect, has restored them to the universal Church of God; but the living contact of soul with soul is denied us, and we are forced to stand outside, waiting till the earthly fellowship corresponds with the heavenly. If, therefore, we draw closer together, it must not be to strengthen ourselves in an antagonistic position, or to shut ourselves up within our own special conceptions, for this would be to deny the very idea of a church, but, drawn together by the dominant sentiments of worship and love, to seek for ourselves and call upon others to seek a larger and diviner life.

"All this, however, you fully recognise, and what you wish for is some sort of judgment on your practical proposals. I am afraid they seem to me at present to have a little of that nature of a 'mechanical scheme' which, as you say, could not produce a fully-grown unity; and I cannot help having doubts whether the suggested arrangement would really generate any increased consciousness of fellowship between distant congregations. I am inclined to think that our

actual meetings with one another, which are increasingly frequent, for conference, for religious sympathy, and for practical work are more influential both in shaping and in strengthening our common life. But if there is even a possibility that the scheme could produce the benefits which you enumerate, and if a sufficient number of congregations to make the experiment impressive can be induced to enter into this kind of union, I can only cherish the hope that your efforts will meet with encouraging success, and be the beginning of a richer growth, of a holier spirit, and of larger aims in that group of churches which, whatever may be their defects, engage our hearts' affection and command our service. By way of practical suggestion I would propose two questions. Might not those congregations which do not use a liturgy adopt a common *order* in the service? This would be a practical convenience, and impart some sense of unity, when people attend the services of a chapel other than their own. Would it not be possible gradually to adopt a common hymn-book? If no existing book is deemed satisfactory, one might be prepared by a committee sufficiently large and varied to command general confidence, and the book, like the Congregational Hymn Book, should have an ample collection and should be printed in a cheap (as well as expensive) form, so as to meet all requirements.

"I fear this is rather a rambling letter; but I have written simply what came, and I hope you will print it or withhold it as you think best. In any case believe in my earnest sympathy with you in your efforts to lead us towards higher ideals and a more worthy practice,—Yours very sincerely, JAMES DRUMMUND."

III.

REV. J. E. ADDIS, M.A.

"Mr. Jacks has asked me to write briefly my views on his scheme for promoting unity of worship in the group of congregations popularly known as Unitarian. I do so in response to the kindness and humility of the request, and not because I have anything new to say. Besides, my position is so remote from his (if at least I rightly interpret his paper) that I cannot hope to speak anything much to the purpose.

"I, of course, am heartily at one with him in believing that the religious spirit is to manifest itself in all the relations of life, in our duties to ourselves, to our families, to the State, and to mankind. Nor do I question the fact that God reveals himself (though not always to the same degree) in nature, in the mind and conscience of man, in the course of history, in literature, and art and in political development. Surely, however, there is nothing here to distinguish our congregations from any other religious societies. All Christians, so far as I know, and many who reject the Christian name, desire to give a religious interpretation to the universe and human life. Nay, many men who are 'without God in the world' think that they find something which they call religion in the same spheres. A plan of union must be exclusive as well as inclusive, and where is the point of differentiation here? Moreover, I doubt very much whether it is at all desirable that a preacher shall travel yearly round the whole orbit of private and public obligation. Religion begins at the centre; it begins with the heart, and when the new heart is given then all things become new. Of course, it is well that the preacher should insist, as occasion serves, on special aspects of duty. Yet, as Luther said, 'It is not good, pious works that make the good, pious man, but the good, pious man that does good, pious works.' A greater than Luther declared that a good tree cannot bear evil fruit, or an evil tree good fruit.

"But does the calendar which Mr. Jacks proposes deserve to be entitled 'A New Christian Year?' With sincere respect and much reluctance I venture to answer 'No.' The central ideas of Christianity are, in my poor opinion, absent. Much as Christians have differed, they have all found the supreme revelation of God in Christ, and if we take this truth away the life blood of Christianity is drained off. 'The heart of the Father,' as Luther put it, 'lies open in the Son,' and in different forms all the books of the New Testament repeat the same principle over and over again. God's love is seen in Christ's life and death, of self-sacrificing love. The kingdom of God which Christ established in his blood unveils God's purpose from the foundation of the world to its consummation. The cross of Christ deepens and in a sense creates the sense of sin, and assures the believer that his sins are forgiven him 'for His name's sake.' Through

Christ we receive not only or even chiefly a new morality, but also a new power to fulfil the law of love. In Christ we have the pledge of faith's victory over the world. Virtually Christ has overcome it already. I for one dare not join in any union in which the motive spring of Christian action is virtually ignored. Then, if space permitted, I should have much to say of Christ's resurrection, of His presence as head over His church, of the approach to God by prayer in His name.

"What, then, is to be done? Little, I think, by outward arrangement. Those who think at all as I do will strive to become and to lead others to become more Christian in faith and prayer and life. They will cultivate fraternal relations with all Evengelical Christians, and I cannot but regard the Book of Common Prayer and Worship which some of us use as one which would be accepted as a genuine bond of union by all Evangelical Christians who care more for things than names. We have another bond in the Sacraments, for we baptize our children into the Church Catholic and not into any sect; in the Lord's Supper we feed on Christ, not on any theory, Unitarian or Trinitarian, concerning Him. No doubt a larger and nobler outward Church will form itself in the future, but the time is not yet. Meantime the ministers of our Presbyterian and Baptist congregations have special duties of charity to each other from the fact that apparent accident has thrown us together and enabled us to give mutual help. That kind of union may be, nay, is disappointing. Yet we cannot, so far as I see, draw much closer for the present.—W. E. ADDIS."

I Wonder Why?

"The tailor puts two useless buttons in the small of the back of men's coats. I wonder why!" "The cook always uses a big carving knife for cutting up suet. I wonder why!" "The leaves of trees change their colour in the Autumn. I wonder why!"

"Send me a receipt to make me think," writes a young girl. "I cannot follow out things in my own mind. I wonder why!"

"I wonder why! I wonder why!" My dear young ladies, your words are admirable. The trouble is with the punctuation. Exchange the exclamation point for the interrogation, and teach your mind better manners than to ask a question without waiting for a reply. Be severe with it. Say: "You want to know? Then find out. If not now, to-morrow. And, mind, no sugar-plums of love-stories until your lesson is learned!"

A bother? Certainly. Real toil, often-times. Nothing worth while comes without toil; but, believe me, these intellectual quests bring forth fruit,—some forty, some sixty, yes, some a hundred fold! Rightly pursued, they not simply inform, but educate. They inculcate habits of promptness, thoroughness, and perseverance; necessitate intercourse with books and men; teach discrimination and integrity to the mind,—in short, make up a little prescription for that sad disease, the inability to think.

The mind that does not grow deteriorates. Alice in the Chess Country learned younger than we that it takes all the running one can do to stay in the same place. Every time that we "wonder why," and do not attempt to learn why, the mind makes a backward slip. The thing itself may be unimportant, but the habit and the discipline of mind are of great importance.

So here is a little suggestion for idle days. You wonder whence comes that odd spot of light on the ceiling. Try to think it out from where you sit. Is it a direct, reflected, or refracted light? Move an object or two in the room, hold up your hand for a shadow. Satisfy yourself before you dismiss the subject. What makes that odd curve on the surface of the river? Is it the remains of an old bridge, an old dam? When was the dam there? Why was it removed? A day of low water may solve the problem, or a call on the oldest inhabitant. I wonder how deep the water is? Why not make a plummet, and use it from your boat? How far is it from one house to another? Measure your step, and learn to pace off a distance accurately. Why are there three flutes in an orchestra? Why is the name on the Dutch stamp Nederland, and is that synonymous with the Netherlands and Holland? Consult an encyclopædia. Never be satisfied with the expression of wonder. Ask questions, dig, read, explore, think, find out, until Madame Why gives up her secrets.

A Visit to Sharpham Park,

BY

EDGAR FRIPP, B.A.

One of the most interesting places I visited during my rambles this summer in England was Glastonbury. It is interesting in many ways. Its situation, in the first place, is remarkable. It lies at the foot of a steep hill which rises high above the neighbouring flats, and is crowned by an ancient tor. From the summit of this hill there is a splendid view of the district. To the north, beyond the distant tower of Wells Cathedral, rises the Mendip range, and to the west, stretching away to the Bristol Channel, once a marshy lake, now a wide expanse of bog meadows, is the famous Vale of Avalon, the scene of one of the most beautiful of the Arthur stories. Standing there I could not but think of Bediver's unwilling surrender of the jewel-hilted Excalibur to the lake, and of the mystic arm that seized and brandished it and drew it beneath the waters, and of Arthur's farewell, and passing with the three weeping queens in a barge into the sunset—as told in our time by Tennyson, and four hundred years ago by Sir Thomas Malory, and three hundred years before that by Walter Map, and before him we know not by whom nor when. In no part of England does there linger such an ancient spirit of romance. The legends of Glastonbury go back to British times. Before the English came British monks found a retreat here, and built a monastery, when the tall hill, with its village, was an island in the midst of a great swamp, and almost inaccessible. And when at last in their westward movement the English arrived at this difficult spot, Christianity from Ireland and Rome had overtaken them and given them such changed feelings towards the conquered that they left the monks undisturbed. They gave their English name of Glastonbury — the borough of the Glastings, who were probably the leaders of the expedition—to the place, which previously was called Avalon or possibly Ynysvitrin; but they did not molest the British monastery. On the contrary, they built an English church side by side with the British one, and thus have left the earliest known record of the blending of the hostile races; for still the ruins of two distinct churches may be seen. The ruins of the so-called chapel of St. Joseph are on the site of the old British church, and a few yards away the ruins of a larger building stand on the ground of the English church. The continuity, therefore, of Christian life and tradition, elsewhere in England broken by the invasion of the heathen conquerors, was at Glastonbury preserved; and at Glastonbury alone, as Mr. Freeman says, among all English churches, would the monks dare to have a legend of so ancient a founder as Joseph of Arimathea.

But Glastonbury has other interests for us. Upon a hillock rising somewhat above the level plain, rather more than two miles from the town, was built, early in the sixteenth century, a residence for the Abbot of Glastonbury, in a deer park of about four hundred acres, called Sharpham Park. At the dissolution of the monastic houses soon afterwards by Henry VIII., the Abbot in occupation, Thomas Whiting, was seized, and after two months' imprisonment, was dragged on a hurdle to the top of the Tor hill and hanged; and Sharpham Park, with its house almost new, by purchase or otherwise, passed into the hands of Sir Thomas Dyer. Here some years later was born Edward Dyer, the son of Sir Thomas, who became the fellow student at Oxford and then bosom friend of Philip Sidney—the scholarly and high-minded friend to whom Sidney when dying of the wound received at Zutphen left half his library. Here also, in 1707, exactly one hundred years after the death of Edward Dyer, was born the great novelist, who has many claims to be our greatest master of fiction, Henry Fielding.

From Glastonbury, then, I made my way to Sharpham Park. The park, indeed, has been done away with, and the old mansion has been turned into a farmhouse; but the main features of the place are preserved. Past some fine trees, I arrived at the front door—an ancient oak door decorated with twisted iron work, and I noticed the Abbot of Glastonbury's coat of arms above the stone porch. The occupier, Mr. Treloggan, and his wife received me courteously, and allowed me to go all over the house; and I stayed longer than I had purposed through their kind attention. I was interested in their name, Treloggan, which, like others with the prefix "Tre," such

as Tremaine, Trevelyan, Tremellian, &c., is of British origin, and a mark of the British element in the population of the south-west of England. And they, I found, were interested to learn to what denomination I belonged; and on being informed they seemed gratified that I was not a clergyman of the English Church! They were Methodists, they told me, and evidently they were very earnest ones. I have seen it stated, as a reason for the Catholicism of the Irish, that no Keltic people are Protestant. That is a very false statement. None at the present time are more Protestant than the Keltic population of Great Britain. The British in Wales, and the British in the South-west of England, in Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall are intensely Protestant. But they are Methodists—they are Dissenters—they are against the English Episcopal Church. In this—in their resistance to the dominatiouof the English Establishment—the Keltsof theseislands, of Cornwall, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, are all at one; but there is absolutely nothing in the Keltic nature in general nor in the Irish character in particular, that should make them Catholic. The Catholicism of the Irish is a vagary, an accident of history; and I do not doubt that if Ireland had been on good terms with England, if she had been treated fairly and kindly by England in the Reformation time—in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—her people would to-day be Methodist or Presbyterian, or of some other form of Protestant Dissent.

My acquaintances, then, were Methodists; and, after the manner of sincere Methodism, their remarks were outspoken and straight. Why was I so interested in the house? A gentleman of the name of Dyer had called there a few days previously, and said that he was descended from the original proprietor of the place. But who was Fielding? A novel writer? Were not novels wicked books? And he had heard that Fielding was a bad man. Why did I care so much about him?

I must say that I felt considerably embarrassed. How incongruous it was. Could anything be more difficult to harmonise than this blunt, earnest Methodism and the spirit of Henry Fielding? How came a Methodist, with his hymn-book and temperance journal and religious tract, into the home of the careless, extravagant, Bohemian author of "Tom Jones?" I tried to bring the two facts together, and after a while the discrepancy did not seem so great as it had appeared. Wesley and Fielding were born within four years of one another, and wide as the poles as they were from one another in their ways of work, they were not so far apart in spirit. They both lived in the age described by Carlyle as "an age of shams," the age of dice and duels and heavy drinking, the age of wigs and powders and patches, and mean and sickly sentiment. And in their different ways they both fought against the shams of their time—Wesley by his burning preaching and his prayer meetings; Fielding by his irony, his satire, his utter candour, and terrible realism—like the realism of Hogarth, who was his friend—in depicting the life he knew. And if, unlike Wesley, Fielding in his younger days had touched and enjoyed sin, had allowed himself to sink into the mire, and gone far to undermine a fine constitution by his wild excesses, yet his after life—his dragging himself *out* of the mire, his rise to a noble and calm wisdom, his stern judgment of himself and his charitable thoughts of others, his love for his beautiful wife, whose memory he enshrined in all his heroines, and last, but not least, his splendid work as a Middlesex magistrate before he was carried on board a vessel, in vain search for health, to die in Lisbon at the comparatively early age of forty-seven—can teach us some great lessons more forcibly than even Wesley could preach them. "Yes," I said, "Fielding *was* a bad man in so much as he did many foolish and wicked things, but he was never so bad as to pretend that he was good whilst doing evil. And he grew into a good man, a wise man, one of the wisest men that ever wrote for the benefit of his country."

"But can a man be good and bad? What is your view of Salvation?"

"Yes," I replied, "a man can be good and bad, and I believe all men are so. Do you not feel so yourself? Is there not an evil element in us, a lower self, a mean and selfish self, to yield to which is depravity? And is there not a higher self in us, a noble self, to yield to which is honour and strength of character? Well, I think Salvation is to yield to this noble self, to follow it through thick and thin, and to gain in honour and strength of character, and to feel

that the lower self is leaving you and losing its old hold upon you."

"Do you believe in hell?" he asked.

"Yes, I do, though perhaps not in the sense you mean. Degradation is hell—depravity, waste of useful power, a guilty and tortured conscience, a knowledge of what *might have been*—that is Hell, and the only real Hell that men have to fear; and even a "novel" that will bring this before us and stamp it upon our minds is a word of God."

"Do you believe," he then said, "that all will be saved. Some people are a very bad lot."

"Yes, some are," I said; and I thought of some of those odious and detestable characters in Fielding's pages. "Yes, some are evil; but, for all that, because I believe that God made the world, and that He made it for some purpose, and gave us all birth for some end, I believe that He will never let us perish—not one. He will bring us all through our stumbling and falling, through our follies and faults, through our hard experience and bitter discipline, to a true and glorious knowledge of Himself. We are His children, the offspring of His Infinite Wisdom, and nothing that can happen to us will cut us off from his love."

"Ah!" he said, "I wish I could believe that! It would make life very different."

And as I returned across those wonderful old meadows, looking up now and again at the Tor on which Thomas Whiting was hanged, I could not help thinking, as thoughts of the past and the present jostled together, how life *would* be different if we could only realise the love of God.

If you want to see what men will do in the way of conformity, take an European hat for your subject of meditation. I daresay there are twenty-two millions of people at this minute. each wearing one of these hats to please the rest,

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"There is one thing," it is said, "which everybody can find, and that is—fault." But whoever finds it has the responsibility on him of showing a better way of doing things. If he is not prepared for this, he ought to leave the fault for some one else to find.

Captain Boxall's Suggestion.

There never was a man so ready with suggestions as Captain Boxall. He had one to offer to everybody. Nor did it in the least matter to him what the emergency was; punctual as clockwork, out came his plan, as if he had been pondering it for hours before. "Why don't you do this, sir?" Why don't you do that, ma'am?" were phrases continually upon his lips. If it had been possible for him to have strayed into Downing Street, when the whole group of Cabinet Ministers were sitting in conclave, discussing some crisis of State, Captain Boxall, before he had overheard six words of the business, would have certainly broke in with, "Why don't you——" And he would have been ready with a plan, too, if he was not put outside the door at once, before he could utter it.

The Captain had lived many years in India, where it is understood Europeans look on the natives very much as children, who do not know how to do anything until they are told the way. Since he had returned to his native village, where he had settled down to spend the remainder of his days, he had gone on treating the people there in just the same manner. He could not pass a lad in the street spinning his top without asking him why he did not wrap the string round in some different way? For it was a peculiarity of Captain Boxall's suggestions that they were always novel; in fact just the very contrary of what anybody else would have thought of. He was encouraged in his habit by the only person who lived with him, his maiden sister. In everything that happened she turned first of all to him, and asked, "What do you suggest, Captain Boxall?"

Some of the Captain's many plans, as might have been looked for, did not succeed, but some others did; and this was to be noted in his case, that when the suggestions failed, they did so completely, just as they turned out amazingly well if they had good results at all. To which of these two categories belonged the strange instance we are about to relate, the reader will find out satisfactorily for himself in the end, without our spoiling the story by anticipating.

Late one night there came a sudden knock on Captain Boxall's door, and before he could reach

it the door opened, and the grinning face of a neighbour was thrust in.

"Captain!" the neighbour said, "there is a thief in your wood-shed! I have turned the key on him, so you have got him safe."

The Captain's sister, who had begun to scream at hearing the word "thief," rallied on learning that he was in the distant wood-shed, not inside the house. Facing round, she said, "Captain Boxall, what do you suggest?"

Certainly, here was a case where the need for counsel had come closely home.

"Well," replied the Captain, trying to be prompt, though all his habitual briskness was not quite forthcoming, "anybody could suggest the police. It must be something very different to that if the thief is to be reformed." Taking up a lantern, he bade the still grinning neighbour to go home. "I shall know how to deal with the case," he added.

And it was very likely that he would know, for Captain Boxall's heart was right, if his head was rather flighty.

When half-way down the dark yard, his sister, standing at the door, saw, by means of the illumination of the lantern her brother carried, that he knelt down in the open air for a moment and prayed. This was not a bad preliminary.

"He is asking God's blessing on his suggestion," Miss Boxall said.

It did not occur to her that, even from the Omniscient, Captain Boxall would ever need to ask for a suggestion itself.

Turning the key back, the Captain passed into the wood-shed, and there he found the thief crushed up close against the wall, trembling in every limb, and with a face as white as that of a ghost. On the ground beside him, tied fast with rope, ready for carrying away, lay a large bundle of wood.

"Ah, my friend," began the Captain, "this is a late visit. Why did you not come earlier? You might have visited us during the day at a better hour. But come with me; I will show you the way into the house," turning about with the lantern.

The thief evidently could not believe his own ears. He stood stockstill, rooted to the spot. But on the Captain, who had walked straight towards the open door, repeating, "Come, do not keep us both out of the cold here," he had to follow. But Captain Boxall spoke again. He saw that the thief had, as might have been looked for, left the bundle of wood behind him. "Nay," he said, "I beg you to bring the wood with you." The thief shook his head, but would not touch the bundle. "You must bring it," continued the Captain. "It is not mine. Make haste with it."

"It is yours," was the man's stammering answer.

"No, it is God's. He only lent it to me. You have not stolen it from me, but from God. Do you not know the eighth commandment?"

More and more bewildered grew the thief; large beads of sweat oozed out on his white face. But the Captain stood there, firm and unyielding. At length, the man had to take up the load and totter with it across the yard after his leader, who carefully showed him the way with the lantern. Captain Boxall marshalled him straight into the kitchen. "Sister," cried the Captain, "we have a visitor. Order bread and cheese and a jug of beer instantly." It happened, however, that the servant was just then cooking the evening meal over the fire, and this was soon put upon the table, the maid being then sent elsewhere. But the guest had no appetite; he could not speak, much less eat. However, the Captain would not be denied, and his sister, who happened to come in, backed him up as usual, though she looked much amazed at this last suggestion of her brother.

The thief had to try to eat, despite his throat being too dry to swallow. In the meantime Captain Boxall went on talking in the same mild way. He asked after the man's family, the names of his children, if he got on well with his wife, and so on. To every answer the man gave he attended patiently and sympathetically. At last the meal was over, and although the man had mustered a little courage during its progress, how he wished he was now outside the house! The beads of sweat again shone upon his face.

"I think you had better stay with us the night over," afresh began the Captain. "Still, just as you will. We could make you up a bed on the sofa, for it is a dark night without, and the roads are none of the best. I can promise you a comfortable shelter; still, as I said before, if you wish to go, no one hinders you from doing so."

"I should be glad to go home," faltered the thief, with tears starting in his eyes.

"Then go, in God's name," was the prompt answer.

The wretched man did not need a second bidding. Shamefacedly muttering good-night, he was making hurriedly for the door when Captain Boxall put himself in his way. "You are not," he said, "taking the wood with you," pointing to the bundle on the floor. "You must not leave it behind you."

In abject humiliation the thief prayed to be forgiven. The Captain told him that he had nothing to forgive. He continued, "Set it right with God. He alone can forgive you the sin. But you must take the wood; I wash my hands of it."

There was no help for it, the thief had to take up the wood and carry it off with him. Ah, how it pressed upon his conscience as well as his back! As he bore it home, it felt tons' weight.

In the very break of dawn next morning there was a timid but insisting knock heard on Captain Boxall's door. The Captain rose and opened it: there stood his guest of the previous evening.

"Why are you here so early?" asked the Captain.

"I could not rest without coming to you," replied the thief. "All night I have been tossing on my bed, repenting that I robbed you and sinned against God. How shall I ask Him to forgive me?"

"That is speaking rightly," gleefully said the Captain. "Come in."

From that day he who had been a thief became a reformed man.

In this one instance, certainly, great success attended the suggestion which occurred to Captain Boxall.

P. H. BRAMSTON.

Christmas Day.

To live for love, to pardon wrong,
  To think that God is kind and just,
These things to every day belong,
  Like honest work and earnest trust:
We would not meet this festival
  With any straining of the heart—
May He who sees and succours all
  Make each one faithful in his part;
And let pretence be put away
This simple, cheerful Christmas Day.

But if there be a fault to own,
  Or if an injury to forget,
Then let us pardon or atone
  And ease the life-string of its fret
Now, when the old symbolic time
  Such frank occasion seems to give
In echoes of the immortal chime,
  Peace and goodwill to all that live!
Let sin and shame be put away
This humble, hearty Christmas Day.

And if there be a heart that breaks
  Or bends too low beneath its cross,
May thoughts of heaven, which gives and takes,
  Alike in love, make up its loss!
O friend, who mourn'st the vacant chair!
  O mother with the babeless breast!
Your book of life is writ more fair
  Above, where all shall be redrest;
Come, bear your grief in gentler way
This sacred, hopeful Christmas Day.

A Christmas Melody.

FAITH.

Faith is in the cradle,
  Hush! let us wait!
Soon these lids will open,—
  A glance that readeth fate.
When this child awaketh,
  Wondrous things shall be,—
What man's sense ne'er seeth
  The soul of man shall see;
And in this vision clear
Heaven shall seem near,
And God's light shining here.

HOPE.

Hope is in the cradle,
  And blue its infant eyes,
As if forsooth they borrowed
  Tint of the doming skies:
Ever they look upward,
  Ever they see the best,—
Vision of coming triumphs
  To calm the heart's unrest.
Hark! hear the child-voice say:
"To-morrow excelleth to-day,
So shall it be alway."

LOVE.

Love is in the cradle,
  Angels sing its birth:
The hour is charged with blessing
  For thee, O happy Earth!
Rise, child! and swing thy sceptre,
  Reign for God o'er men.
Bear all, dare all, and fail not
  Till Eden come again.
In thee, O gracious love,
We see, as from above,
The Spirit liks a dove.

EDWARD B. PAYNE.

Typographical Trippings.

Readers blessed with a keen appreciation of the ridiculous have to thank remiss "readers" of another sort for much unlooked-for amusement. Erring compositors have a knack of blundering as felicitously as though some mischief-loving sprite ruled the work of type-setting, and impelled the perpetration of mistakes looking exceedingly like premeditated jokes. One cannot help being a little suspicious when a tender-hearted politician is made to declare he would rather the Russians stabbed their horses in the Bosphorus than that the Turks should be permitted to exercise their cruel propensities unchecked; a temperance-advocating bishop reported as exhorting his hearers not to give up the bottle; and a senator as expressing the wish that he had a widow in his bosom—possible as it may be that the conversion of "stabled" into "stabbed," "battle" into "bottle," and window into "widow" came about quite accidentally, without malice aforethought.

We can sympathise with Mr. Proctor's dismay upon finding himself responsible for "links, bonds, and stripes for the violent kind of spectres," in a paper on spectroscopic photography, when what he had written was "lines, bands, and striæ near the violet end of the spectra."

Swift's *Battle of the Books*, Macaulay's *Laps of Ancient Rome*, Palmer and Drake's *Dessert of Exodus*, have been priced in a bookseller's list; and a work on block-printing catalogued as containing 'sixty-nine engravings either from wood or metal, twelve of which have been inscriptions, representing scenes of Christian mythology, figures of patriarchs, saints, devils, and other dignitaries of the Church.' For the last, we cannot hold the printer blamable; but he is assuredly answerable for the chronological impossibility involved in the announcement for sale of 'an old *History of England* by Hume (published in 1767), from the invasion of Julius Cæsar to Revolution 1868.' By another mishandling of figures, an inquiring correspondent was informed that an Act for abolishing Gretna Green marriages was passed in 1856, and came in force on the 1st January, 1837. Trifling with figures is a thing to be avoided. The Hamburg almanacs for 1880 announced the holding of the February horse-fair on the 4th instead of the 24th of that month; and the influx of horses and horse-dealers into the city upon the first-named day caused much perturbation to the authorities, who, ignorant of the blunder of the almanac-mongers, had made no arraugements for the reception of the visitors. They got over the difficulty, to their own and everybody else's satisfaction; but ordained that henceforth no almanac should be published until it had received official certification.

Journalists nowadays give such free play to their invention, that the credulity of newspaper readers is sufficiently taxed without asking them to believe certain causes were heard in the Common Fleas Division; that the Copenhagen police intercepted a box of Orsini *bonds* on its way to Princess Thyra as a wedding-gift; that one summer day at Coventry there was 'a fresh freeze, and the heat eighty-four in the shade;' that two hundred tenant-farmers went to a farm near Loughrea, belonging to a 'suspect' in Galway Jail, and cut, bound, and stacked four acres of cats (for 'oats'); and that Professor Virchow, on his appearance upon the platform at the International Congress, was greeted with an oration from a very large number of friends; that 'the snouts of ten thousand Democrats rent the air' at an open-air demonstration.

According to a newspaper report of the last royal progress to Westminster, 'Gold Stick' was ousted from his accustomed place in the procession by 'The Old Stick;' an official who might have done his sovereign good service when 'The Queen drove *two cows* to visit the King and Queen of Denmark at Lisburne House,' though Her majesty might drive *through Cowes* without his assistance. Just before the General Election, one of the organs of Her Majesty's Opposition announced that the Liberals of Marylebone had repaired all the breeches in their ranks, and buckled on the armour of battle. Another public instructor lately informed us that among the works of art to be seen in London streets were 'the statutes of King George III. with his pigtail, in Pall Mall, and of the Duke of Bedford, ploughing in his ducal robes in Russell Square;' while among less curious news items we read of a ship becoming a perfect rock; of the purchase of a plot of land for the Ionic Sol Fa College; of a builder charged with not doing

his work in a proper way, 'nor had the copings, coigns, been made of stones, bricks, or other inflammable material;' and of a dead man who 'bore an accidental character, and the jury returned a verdict of excellent death.' In a mining-camp story, a player at poker deals himself a bigger hand than ever the Heathen Chinee could accomplish, namely, 'both bowers and the king, besides two acres;' and another story-teller says: 'At the gate, an honest tar, with one wooden leg, and suspiciously ample nether garments, craved arms;' blunders of which the writers were as innocent as the Philadelphian editor who found himself obliged to apologise for stating that a man who died in the street had been kicked up by a policeman, through the compositor taking the liberty of substituting a *k* for a *p*, with as little respect for an 'editorial' as that shown by his brother-typos, to whom we are indebted for 'Happy is the country which has no animals,' 'Master M'Grath (the famous greyhound) is a good god,' and 'American preachers pay great attention to manner, but British preachers pray very little.'

When editors themselves suffer at their printer's hands, mere advertisers cannot expect to escape. A music-master desiring the public should know that his system of instruction extended from the primary elements to thorough-bass, saw himself described as the exponent of a method, extending from primeval liniments to thorough-bore. The members of a Quartette Society discovered all too late that 'When married wretches sink to sleep,' did duty in their programme for 'When wearied wretches sink to sleep.' A patent-medicine vendor found himself lauding the virtues of 'Live Pills;' and a waste-paper dealer who advertised for old ledgers had occasion to wonder how many landladies would respond to the tempting offer of so much per hunderweight for 'lodgers without covers.' Sometimes the victimised advertiser has had reason to be grateful to the wrongdoer. On the night of the first performance of *The Woman in Red* at a country theatre, the house was packed, much to the surprise of the manageress, who had not found the townsfolk very eager for theatricals. She discovered next day that the play had been misprinted *The Woman in Bed.*

Sometimes things get mixed, and nicely too, if not quite so neatly as was done by the printer of a Canadian newspaper, who tagged part of a recipe for tomato catsup on the opening paragraph of an article on Catholicism in Africa, with the following result: — "The Roman Catholics claim to be making material advances in Africa, especially in Algeria, where they have 185,000 adherents, and a missionary society for Central Africa. During the past three years they have obtained a firm footing in the interior of the continent, and have sent forth several missionaries into the equatorial regions. They are accustomed to begin their work by buying heathen children and educating them. The easiest and best way to prepare them is to first wipe them with a clean towel; then place them in dripping pans and bake them until they are tender. Then you will have no difficulty in rubbing them through a sieve, and will save them by being obliged to cut them in slices and cook for several hours."

Humility is most serviceable as an under garment, and should never be worn as an overcoat.

All the doors that lead inward to the secret place of the Most High, are doors that lead outward—out of self, out of smallness, out of wrong.

General Gordon, it will be remembered, once accepted the post of private secretary to a newly-appointed Governor-General of India.

The private secretary, suddenly, and without warning, flung up the appointment, to the surprise of everybody, and returned home.

One evening, in course of conversation, the topic of fashionable society was touched upon, and Gordon made reference to the reason that induced him to give up office on the occasion mentioned.

The true and only reason he had, he said, for leaving India was that he could not put up with the ways and customs of the high social circle in which he was expected to move.

"Dress for dinner, dress for evening parties, dress for balls, dress and decoration, decoration and dress—day after day! I could not," said Gordon, "stand the worry of it, and rather than do so I gave up the appointment."

THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

Yakino and the Frog.

(BY CHARLES ROPER.)

There are many strange stories told about Totty Nipkin. I can only tell you some of them unless you come and live in my house so that I can relate a fairy story every night before you go to bed. The marvellous things he did with the magic bone are extremely hard to believe; and, of course, not having lived in those old days myself, I can only relate to you the things which I have been told.

Totty Nipkin was always doing a good turn to somebody or other. If a dog broke its leg the dwarf would bind it up; if the fowls had snarls he chopped them up rue pills and gave them peppercorns. Whether at home, on the farm, or in the fens, he was always kind to animals that in any way needed his assistance.

It happened one day when he was walking by the riverside, that he was startled by a frog leaping a great height and then lying panting with exhaustion and fright all amongst the long grass. So he rubbed his ears with his talisman, took the poor little frog in his hand, and spoke to it in the frog language.

"What's the matter, wee froggie?" said he.

"Oh! I've had such a narrow escape," replied the frog. "I've just come out of a pike's belly. Such a great big pike, almost like a shark."

"Indeed!" said the dwarf. "How did you manage to get out? It isn't many frogs that get out of a pike when he once swallows them."

"Well, you see, I know more than most frogs, and I tickled his ribs as I went down. My claws are pretty sharp, and I stuck them into his lining, which made him cough so violently as to vomit me out of his mouth again."

"Think yourself lucky, froggie," replied Totty Nipkin.

"But I am very unlucky," sighed the frog; and actually a tear glistened in its eye.

"How can you say so after so fortunate an escape?"

"Because I am a young lady, a princess, by right; only a wicked woman has put a spell upon me and turned me into a frog."

She told Totty Nipkin the whole of her story, and it was as follows:—

She was the Princess Rita, and she loved the reigning prince, and he loved her. They were, in truth, betrothed; and soon the nuptials would have been celebrated had not a very wicked rival stepped between them to ruin their joy and thwart their honourable designs.

There was an ambitious woman, by name Yakino, at the Court, who wished to marry the Prince herself and was, therefore, madly jealous because he gave his love to another. She employed love potions and charms all to no purpose, and the day for the marriage was close at hand.

Then she took a long and secret journey to a diabolical witch, who did not scruple at doing anything to gain her ends. She poured ingredients into a cauldron, and read the stars and wandered all night amongst the hobgoblins in the graveyard, and then she declared she could

do nothing until a certain magic diamond ring which the Prince owned was secured and thrown into the deep stream.

"WHISPERS FROM FAIRY LAND," by CHARLES ROPER. *Illustrated by Tom Charman. Manchester: John Heywood. Price 2s. 6d.* This is a delightful set of Fairy Tales, illustrated with some quaint and clever pictures. Mr. Roper has the wonderful gift of writing wise, good nonsense, so much better than most people's wise, good sense. He has given us a charming book for a Christmas Present to the little folks. Drs. Gradgrind and Dryasdust might not appreciate these delicious absurdities, but let us be thankful that the world of childhood is not yet given over to their tender care. He who does not believe in fairies—let him go hang!

Afterwards, on St. Mark's Eve, which was near at hand, the wicked, jealous rival was to drop a poison into the ear of the sleeping Princess, just at the hour of midnight, and it would transform her victim into a frog, which she could dispose of as she thought fit. Then she herself could love the Prince, and, no doubt, being ignorant of her infamous work, he would marry her, for her beauty was great and her manners pleasing.

Now, the Prince knew of the magic power of his ring —namely, that no harm could come to him and his while the ring remained in his possession.

As you may imagine, he was exceedingly careful in guarding his treasure.

Upon Yakino's return from consulting the witch she had a ring secretly made, which at first sight might easily be mistaken for the original; and, bribing an unscrupulous servant at the Court, she managed to get the rings changed. Before the Prince found out the fraud she had flung his ring into the deep stream that ran through the royal demesne.

Great was the Prince's grief when he discovered his loss. He had search made everywhere, and cross-questioned all his servants; but failed to find the ring. And all the time he did not so much as dream of the wicked plot which I have described.

St. Mark's Eve at last came, and in the dead of night the wicked Yakino stole quietly into Princess Rita's bedroom, where she was sleeping peacefully and unsuspiciously, and dropped into her upturned ear the magic charm given to her by the witch. The Princess at once began to croak, and turned straightway into a frog. This the wicked rival took away with her, and shrinking from actual murder, she carefully confined it in a strong case and fed it daily.

Imagine, if you can, the great consternation which prevailed the following day, and for many days, at the strange and inexplicable disappearance of the beautiful Princess Rita! The Prince almost died of grief, and would not be comforted for a long time. Then Yakino by degrees artfully drew his attention upon herself, by speaking soft words and smiling sweet smiles.

After some months had rolled by the Prince's counsellors advised him to marry Yakino, for they did not know any more than he did how very wicked and deceitful she was. The Prince consented, and the wedding-day was fixed.

Now Yakino did not like keeping the frog any longer in her possession, lest by some chance or other it should become re-transformed back again into the princess; so she took it down to the river one day and threw it in, just as and just where she had previously thrown in the ring, fully expecting that one of the voracious pike that abounded there would swallow poor froggie without a moment's hesitation.

As soon as the frog touched the water, Yakino saw a huge fish dart out from the weeds and gobble up its helpless victim; then she went back home feeling that she was freed for ever from her former rival. However, it was not so to be. The desires of the wicked are often brought to nought.

As the frog went down the fish's gullet it scratched at the lining most violently, and continued to do so even when it reached the stomach, until the pike was glad to vomit the troublesome morsel, when, as we already know, it managed to scramble safely to land.

"When I was in the pike's belly," said froggie to Totty Nipkin, "I caught sight of a brilliant, dazzling gem, which could be no other than the diamond in the Prince's lost ring. Now, the legend runs that whoever puts that ring on his or her finger can defy all magic and secure the fulfilment of every honourable wish."

"I'll tell you what I'll do," said the dwarf. "I'll try and catch that fish, secure the ring, and restore you to your human form and rightful position. The Prince celebrates his wedding to-morrow. I will arrange so as to surprise them all, and Yakino shall make public confession of her sins."

Putting froggie in his pocket, Totty Nipkin went to the artificial lake and secured a goldfish alive and strong. Then he returned to the river where the big pike lay watching for prey, baited his hook with the goldfish, and threw it into the water. In a short time he was tugging might and main with a huge, ravenous fish, and succeeded ultimately in landing him on the long grass.

In the twinkling of an eye he drew out his knife, ripped open the pike's maw, and there, to his great delight, he saw the glittering diamond ring. He might have released the poor frog from bondage then and there, but he wanted an effect far more dramatic than that.

On the morrow, when the bells were ringing and crowds had assembled to watch the gorgeous and truly royal procession, Totty Nipkin took his stand close by where the Prince would pass on his way to church. Great was the general consternation when the comical figure of the dwarf stepped into the roadway as the Prince came along, and, obsequiously bareing and bowing his head, held in his hand the diamond ring that shone with the briliancy of a star.

"Noble sire," said the dwarf; "knowest thou this ring?"

"Truly it is the treasure I had lost. Where didst thou find it?"

Yakino, who was sitting by the Prince's side, turned deadly pale. It was like a ghost from the dead confronting her. She bit her lips, and little dreamt of what was to follow.

Totty Nipkin related to the Prince how he had caught the pike and found the ring inside it.

"Many thanks to thee, thou clever dwarf," said the Prince. "Thou shalt, if thou wilt, be henceforth my cupbearer. Give me my precious ring."

"Nay, my liege, not yet," said Totty, making another very humble obeisance; "I have still more to show thee."

Thereupon he drew poor froggie from his pocket and held it so that both the Prince and Yakino could see it.

The wicked woman went almost mad with rage. She urged the Prince to drive on and to have the dwarf whipped for his impertinence; but she did not know the power of the dwarf's charms, for not all the coachmen in the royal service could have made the horses budge an inch unless Totty Nipkin had wished them to do so.

"This frog," said the dwarf, "had also been inside the belly of the same fish, and, having been miraculously released, she told me of the whereabouts of your wonderful jewel. And now, most noble sire, I place the ring upon the foot of the frog and hand them both to you to cherish and to keep."

Thereupon Totty Nipkin placed the magic ring on the frog, thus breaking the spell, and in the presence of the assembled multitude the frog quickly assumed human guise, and was instantly recognised by both Prince and people as the long lost Princess Rita for whom they had so sorely grieved.

Yakino hid her face in her hands for very shame, and, falling on her knees, begged forgiveness of her whom she had so cruelly wronged.

Much as she deserved the severest punishment, Princess Rita forgave her, though she was necessarily degraded to the lowest position at the Court.

Amid cheering and singing the procession journeyed to the church, where the Prince was duly married—not to the wicked Yakino, but to the beloved Princess Rita; and they lived together happily for very many years.

Gleanings.

Knowledge, like food, requires digestion.

Is thinking all? Should not life be a *loving* also?

Nature and Wisdom always say the same thing.

He that speaks ill of other men burns his own tongue.

We can do more good by being good than in any other way.

We are safer in the storm that God sends us, than in a calm when befriended by the world.

The power to do great things generally arises from the willingness to do small things.

The punctual and the busy man can mostly find leisure; the negligent and the idle, never.

He that voluntarily continues ignorant is guilty of all the crimes which ignorance produces.

A false friend is like the shadow on a dial, which appears in fine weather, but vanishes at the approach of a cloud.

A wise man hath his foibles as well as a fool; but the difference between them is, that the foibles of the wise man are kept from the world and known to himself; while the foibles of the fool are known to the world, but concealed from himself.

We must learn to distinguish between real and sham feeling. A man meets you in the street. He is very gushing. He says, "Oh! how glad I am to see you. How long it is since we met. You know we were schoolboys together." He shakes you warmly by the hand. "I wish we could see more of each other. I am sure we should be the dearest of friends." "That is right," you reply. "You're just the man I want, for I am in sore need of five pounds!" If you had shot him he could not look more surprised. He changes colour, and stammers out, "I—I don't happen to have five pounds about me. Good-bye. We shall meet again soon." Well that kind of feeling is not even respectable.

News from the Field.

LYE.—A two days' sale of work, promoted by Mr. Wrigley and his family, was held on Monday and Tuesday, November 4th and 5th, in the Temperance Hall, and was fairly well attended during the time it was opened. The object of the sale was to raise sufficient money to build a new class room to meet the increased accommodation, and also to add, if possible, to the funds of the church. The following ladies had charge over the various stalls:—Mrs. Wrigley, Mrs. Hall, Mrs. Timmis, Mrs. Perry, Mrs. Cox, Miss Wooldridge, Miss Amy Wooldridge, Miss A. Pardoe, Miss Perry, Miss Fox, Miss Amy Cox. Mr. Wrigley presided over a book stall, and Messrs. James Elcock and A. Powell looked after a hardware stall. The Rev. Joseph Wood opened the bazaar on Monday and gave an important speech on the education question. The proceeds of the bazaar amounted to £53, so that the £60 needed is nearly reached.—The Rev. I. Wrigley has been elected a member of the School Board.

WHITCHURCH.—We understand that our friend, the Rev. G. Eyre Evans, has received and accepted a hearty and unanimous invitation to the pastorate of the church at Sale. Mr. Evans has laboured for seven years with great earnestness and no little success at Whitchurch, and his removal will be an unspeakable loss to the friends whom he gathered round him in the little Shropshire town. We wish them a speedy settlement and Mr. Evans a happy career in his new and more important sphere of labour.